Essex's Excellency:

OR, THE

Gallantry of the Freeholders of that County.

Being a short Account of the Brave British Behaviour of those Worthy Freeholders, in the Choice of their Knights to serve in the next Parliament.

Together with

The Truly Noble LORD GRAY His SPEECH at the Close of their Choice.

Published by an Eye-witness of their most Noble Courage for the Example of their Neighbouring Counties.

AS Long Parliaments have been heretofore the great mischief & ruin of the Free-born English man's Liberty, which this Nation in general began to be very sensible of, by the abundant Evils that had like to have befallen the good people of *England*, even almost to the overthrow of all Propriety and Priviledges, as well as Religion, which the All-wise God, out of pity to this Nation, hath now at last put an end unto, by an unexpected hand of Providence: So did there lately seem to threaten as great an Evil by burdening the Counties with the Choice of too frequent Parliaments; and the Cause of this Fear did not arise in the hearts of wise men without some Cause; for Drinking and Revelling, being grown into both Fashion and Custom in many places of this Kingdom, both Burroughs and Counties, as necessary Qualifications to make a wise Representative, Gentlemen indeed, those that are really such in their sober deportment and carriage, began to grow weary; though they could not but see, that nothing but utter destruction must at last most certainly swallow up both them and their Posterity, in some short time, in case persons were Chosen, as only obtained their Elections by Drinking and Feasting the Country. For wise men well know that such excessive Charges was so unreasonable a thing to be born by any honest person, that hath no other end than his Countries good, that it could not but be imagined long since that those persons that got such their Elections by those wates and means, had another end in it, and designed repayment again in a private and unjust way out

of the peoples pockets, by selling their Votes at a dear rate for the raising of money, and in other matters of great moment.

Nay, some persons, and not a few, to the eternal Infamy of both them that paid, and them that received such wages of unrighteousness, were grown to that excess after they were sent up Members to the late Long Parliament, that they received yearly more money for selling their Country, than it cost them to be so elected; so that at last to be once got a Parliament man, was grown a sure way both of profit and honour, though purchased out of the poor peoples hearts blood; for those men to have good places, or large Pensions, would and did as easily part with their Countries Liberty, and the Peoples Freedom and Right, as well as their money; and, which may easily appear, if we consider their domineering over their Equals, and despising Law, and longing for Seats in the late Long Parliament, to be continued to them and their Heirs for ever.

But not to trouble you further with their ill Proceedings at this time, since we have yet room for hopes that we shall have once more an *English* Parliament that will look into such miscarriages, and give a due reward to such Offenders in the late Long Parliament, who either for Places or Pensions, sold their Votes and their Country at a cheaper rate than *Esau* did his birthright.

But as to the Gallantry and Nobleness of divers of the Gentry of *Essex*, as well as the whole body of the Freeholders, there take this short Narrative; The Writ being directed for the Choice of two Knights for the Shire, *Tuesday* last, the 12th. of this Instant *August* was appointed the Day, being the first County-Court; And whereas Sir *Eliab Harvey*, and Collonel *Mildmay* were former Members in the last good Parliament. Collonel *Mildmay* did sometime before the Day of Election intimate to Sir *Eliab Harvey* his intentions to stand to be one of the Knights of the Shire; and that as they had been both chosen before, he believed the Country would now do the like freely; but though the Collonels Interest in the County was looked upon by all to be that which brought them both to be so easily Elected before; yet Sir *Eliab* (as is believed) trusting either to his own Interest, or the Interest of the Duke of *Albemarle*, and some other of the Gentry, did absolutely refuse to joyn himself with Collonel *Muldmay*; but on the contrary, was resolved to stand alone, that now his Interest with the Duke, and some of the Gentry, and Sir *Thomas Middleton*, was sufficient not only to be Chosen Knights of the Shire himself; but also wholly to lay aside and disappoint the Collonel of his intentions; and in effect under hand to oppose his Election, which was thought to be more easily done, because the Collonel, like the old English man, was resolved not to be at any cost or charges in the obtaining his Election, thinking, as indeed it is a burden sufficient to serve their Country as their Member, and not vainly to throw away his Estate, as well as his labour to be their Servant too; for that his Noble Spirit well knew, that he that served his Country faithfully, deserved the Thanks of his Country, without spending his Estate to be Chosen: but some were not idle all this time, since the Dissolution of the last Parliament, to reproach, vilifie and abuse that Worthy Person, Collonel *Mildmay*; yet the summe of all their malice could reach no higher, after all, but to reproach him for a Phanatick, a name too common in the mouths of our half Protestants, and so little understood by them; but too too grateful to the Papists, by which they have most maliciously branded every sober person in *England*

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with that name; nay, a man can hardly pass through the Streets with sobriety in his face, but he is branded for a Phanatick; and by some that would make us believe they are Protestants themselves; but if Phanatick does denote a mad man, as I have understood it always did, till within the compass of twenty years last past, then I am sure it is as false an aspersion cast on that Worthy Person, as that was which was cast upon the Apostles, that they were mad-men for Preaching the Resurrection from the dead, and Judgment Day to come; but let such, whoever they are, know, it is a thousand times more honourable to be called by them *Phanaticks* than *good Christians*, a thing I fear they are very little acquainted with more than the Name: But there we leave them where they most delight, and proceed to tell you, that some of the Tribe of *Levi* both before and at this Election were very zealous against this worthy person Coll. *Mildmay*; for one of them standing by a Papist that Voted against the Collonel, cryed, well done, he did not doubt but that they should agree well enough in the main, though not in all points. Some sent their Paper-pellet to all their Neighbourhood, and especially to their own Club of the Long Robe, and did incourage and threaten them upon their obedience to their Diocesian, that they should not fail, but make all the Interest possibly they could, that Collonel *Mildmay* might not be Chosen, but all hands for Sir *Thomas Middleton*, whom they knew would never fail their Cause, nor their Church, which was all those Gallions cared for, no matter what became of their Country; it was the Liberties and Sanctines of the Lay-men they hated; and they must be brought into blind obedience to them, and pin their Faith on their sleeves, or else all was undone, and the King and Country lost; this was their cry and exhortation; and my Lord Duke supposing his Interest in the Country to be made greater by standing up against Collonel *Mildmay*, with all his power and might, both in his person and friends, engages all against the Collonel, and musters up all to come and give their Vote for *Middleton* against *Mildmay*.

But the day being come, the Roads were every where filled round *Chelmsford* with vast numbers of Gentry and Freeholders, the night before there not being room enough in that Town for Lodging, and in the Morning by Seven of the clock Coll. *Mildmay* came from his house to the place near the Hop-ground, with about 1000 Gentlemen and Free-holders, where met him my Lord *Shandish* with about 1000 more, all on horse back, crying out, *A Mildmay, a Mildmay*, with many vollies of Acclamations; presently after the ever noble and renowned Lord *Gray* met the Collonel in a most sumptuous habit, with his led Horses in rich Trappings, and about 2000 Horse attending him; then the Lord *Gray* with the Collonel began to march into the Town, where they were met with near 2000 Horse more, and so passing through the Town into the Field in very good order, with their mouths loudly hollowing for *A Mildmay* only, and crying out, God bless my Lord *Gray*, they there rested for about an hour, while they drew up in a posture to be viewed, and being then all got together, was not esteemed less than 6000 men. Not long after came into the Town Sir *Thomas Middleton*, with about 150 or 200 Horse men, and my Lord Duke and Sir *Eliab Harvey* with about 400 men more, accounting their Servants and Attendants; and Sir *Eliab* came into the Field near to Coll. *Mildmay*: but the Collonels men being angry that Sir *Eliab* should espouse another interest, and not joyn with the Collonel, resolved unanimously as one man, that they would only give one Voyce for the Collonel, and Reserve the

nther for such a person as the Collonel should please to nominate to them himself: which being resolved, the Collonel with his company drew out of the Field to the Town-house, and riding several times about it, with an incredible shout for a *Mildmay*, a *Mildmay*, that scarce the like was ever seen at any Election; and the hour being come for the Writ to be read, the Collonel goes to the Town-Hall, and being told the High Sheriff was ready, made a short Speech to the people to this effect:

Gentlemen and Friends, since I see you judge me worthy to serve you as a Member in this next Parliament, I promise you, according to the best of my understanding, faithfully to discharge that trust you so unanimously intend to repose in me; and since you judge me a fit Person, I hope you may give some credit to my recommendation of another Person to joyn with me in that Service, which I shall name with your leave, and if you approve of, and judge him worthy also, though he be not here, yet he may soon be sent for to come among you: To which all the People gave a great shout, and cryed, *Name him, name him*; which then the Collonel did, and told them, *John Lomott Honeywood*, Esq; a Person *of a very good Estate in this County*, was in his Judgment a very honest and worthy Person, and one that he did verily believe would serve them faithfully: Which the people liking, immediately with a great shout cried, *Send for him, a* Honeywood, *and a* Mildmay, *and none else*; and so the word being given out among the Free-holders, and the Collonel with them surrounding the Market-places two or three times, that the people might be all informed of the second person, every man at last (which was within the compass of half an hour) cryed out as much a *Honeywood* as a *Mildmay*; and Mr. *Honeywood* being come up to the Company, he and the Collonel, with Sir *Eliab Harvey*, and Sir *Thomas Middleton* went into Court, where the Sheriff was ready, and the *Noble Lord Gray* did the Collonel and Mr. *Honeywood* the Honour to enter into the Court with them, to see matters fairly carryed, which otherwise might not have been: The Duke of *Albemarle* on the other side, and some of the Gentry were pleased to be in Court also; and the Writ being read about Ten of the clock at the High Sheriffs command, *who in all the occurrences of the whole action carryed himself like a worthy Gentleman, and did endeavour as much as could be to prevent any disorders in the Election*: The Writ being read, and demand being made who they would chuse for their Knights of the Shire, was immediately answered by the whole people with loud cryes, *A* Mildmay, *a* Mildmay, *and no Courtier nor Pensioner*; and then silence being made again, and demanded who they would have for the other person, they did as unanimously cry out, *A* Honeywood, *a* Honeywood, *a good Protestant*; and it could hardly be perceived, that any there present of the Electors were of an other mind, or took so much as notice of Sir *Eliab Harvey*, or Sir *Thomas Middleton*, (except their Servants, and those that came along with the Duke, and his Attendants) but notwithstanding the great inequality both in the Field and the place of Elections, as it is before expressed, yet Sir *Eliab Harvey* and Sir *Thomas Middleton* demanded the Poll; and before the beginning of the Poll, Sir *Eliab Harvey* was pleased to tell the people, that Coll. *Mildmay* had broke his promise with him; but in what, was not then understood, otherwise than it was suspected he meant, that Coll. *Mildmay* ought not to have joyned with any other Person but him, but the Collonel giving ear to what was said by him, declared to the people, That he never was in the least guilty of leaving Sir *Eliabs* interest, or designing so to doe, or under any promise to joyn with

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him whatsoever; for that it was so far from any such thing, that he told him; *Sir* Eliab, *I wonder you should charge me thus, when you know the contrary, that I did desire you to stand with me, and to joyn interests together, to save the Countrey Trouble and Charges; and you absolutely denyed it, and always returned me answer, You must not, nor would not joyn with any.* Which words of the Collonel were attested in the Court to be true, by a very worthy Gentleman, that averred to his knowledge, the Collonel had sought to Sir *Eliab*, and was absolutely denyed.

These words passing, the Poll was begun, and each Person that stood had his Clark to take the Poll, which began about Eleven a clock that day, where was such excessive thronging of the Free-holders, being eager to be polled, that the Court was fain to adjourn several times that day to ease themselves; the tumult being great, and the Countreymen fearing some trick might be put upon them, would not leave the place at no rate, crying out, It was a shame that any Gentleman should offer to stand a Poll at so vast a disproportion, since the whole Countrey was for *Mildmay* and *Honeywood*, and wondred that Sir *Eliab Harvey*, and Sir *Thomas Middleton*, and the Duke, would oppose the Countrey, who was all but as one man; but Sir *Eliab Harvey* in reply to Coll. *Mildmay* then told the people, That now he did declare he would joyn with Sir *Tho. Middleton*; but after a little space, when he was informed that Coll. *Mildmay* had never joyned with any man till he came to the place of Election, and saw him joyn with Sir *Thomas Middleton*, then Sir *Eliab Harvey* very worthily told the people, he would not at all concern himself in joyning with any man whatsoever. And no sooner was the Poll begun, but some persons that would be thought both to be Gentlemen, and the wisest Justices in the County, in oppositon, and as it then should seem to warrant no other than to breed a disturbance, first on the Bench gave Coll. *Mildmay* and his party very reviling Language, as pitiful inconsiderable Phanaticks, and the like, and such words as only befitted a railing person in his Pulpit, or a drunken God-damme, telling them they had none but a company of Clowns, and that the Collonel had never a Gentleman among them, nor any person that was a Gentleman would offer to set up such persons to be Parliament-men, and the like; which proceedings did enrage the Free-holders, and made them cry out, they were better men than themselves; and all their abuses and tricks could not perswade nor affright them from standing up for their Countreys good; and then told them, None but Papists and Half-Protestants would abuse such men. But those of Sir *Thomas Middleton*'s party, and such especially as polled for him, were not content with giving ill language of the basest sort, but upon the Bench did all they could to make disturbances, by violences offered to the Collonels person, one of them having the Impudence (who calls himself a Knight) to take him by the Hair or the Nose, to provoke the Collonel to strike, that so there might be a quarrel, so as to make a disturbance and evacuate the Election, or at least prolong the Poll, which was aimed at on purpose to tire out the Countrey-people, it being Harvest-time, and also they hoping, that they bearing their own cost and charges, would send them home the sooner; so that by delaying the Poll, they might at last be in some equality with the Collonel, and when the Collonel well answered that Person, and they saw that would not doe, and that the Noble Lord *Gray* began now to be sensible of their abuses and designs, the next thing they undertook, was to quarrel with the Lord *Gray* himself; but the person that did that being a Peer, and the Noble

Lord *Gray* vindicating his Honour with that Peer, and giving him an anſwer ſuitable to a Challenge ſaid to be ſent him. I ſhall not further repeat that matter: But when that would not do their work neither, then ſome of the Juſtices of the Peace (as they pretended themſelves) for the promoting their cauſe, fell upon the Clark that took the Poll for Coll. *Mildmay*, and a wrathful Fellow, to ſhew his kindneſs to his Friend the Duke, and the other perſons that ſtood againſt the Collonel, in his abundant Wiſdom, Juſtice and Manhood, aſſaulted the ſaid Clark, and ſtruck him ſeveral times, upon pretence the Clark did not doe his duty by ſtanding bare to his Worſhip, though then the Court was ſhut, (and the Sheriff not there, which only made the Court) and committed the perſon into cuſtody for calling the Clergy-men *Prieſts*; although he could not but well know, it is a Title they all own, and would fain be termed ſuch; and the Clark muſt be carried to Priſon, and the Books he had taken the Poll in muſt by all means be taken from him, which was indeed thought to be the deſign of the quarrel, to get the Books from him: Then a worthy perſon which did only intimate his miſlike of theſe things, by interpoſing himſelf, was abuſed. But theſe proceedings, though very prejudicial to the perſons that bore them, yet were no advantage to their own party, for the worthy Free-holders were the more incenſed againſt them: And if the Wiſdom of my Lord *Gray*, the Sheriff and the Collonel, had not been great, theſe proceedings might have cauſed great miſchiefs; but the Countrey-men were ſo ſenſible of the brave courage and gallantry of my Lord *Gray* that no ſooner was he, the Collonel and Mr. *Honeywood* leaving the Court to go to their Lodgings at all times, but they all as one man, attended them with great ſhouts, crying, *God bleſs my Lord* Gray *for ſtanding for the Countrey-men*; and then crying out, *A Mildmay, a Honeywood*: but when the other party went from the Court, there was ſilence enough. Thus the Poll continued from Tueſday about Eleven a clock till about nine on the Friday following; where in all that whole time the Freeholders Zeal was ſo great, that they never abated of their Courage, and like Noble Engliſh men, worthy Eternal Honour, lay in Town at their own coſt and charges, and ſcorned to put their Members to two-pence charge; but divers of them did help and aſſiſt one another, and with that willingneſs and chearfulneſs, that it is beyond expreſſion, which other Counties having ſo good an Example, I hope will take pattern by, and ſcorn to be treated by the Members they chuſe, but will bear their own charges, and not diſcourage honeſt men, which would ſerve them, were it not for the exceſſive charges, as well as burden.

Theſe worthy Freeholders would often ſay, That it was the high way to make men Penſioners and Knaves, to put them to charges to be Choſen; and ſo conſtant were theſe men in their reſolutions of Chuſing thoſe worthy Gentlemen, that they would call out to the Court oft times when they were ſo thronged, and almoſt ſtifled to death, That they would not be tired out notwithſtanding the diſcouragements they met with ſometimes from the Court in preferring other perſons that came in freſh to be Polled before them. And they would often ſay, if we ſtay this month we will not be tired out, and other times cryed out moſt bitterly in the Streets againſt the Penſioners in the late Long Parliament, that had almoſt ſold them for ſlaves: And at other times when they were told they would loſe their Corn on the ground if they ſtayed longer, they made this bold Anſwer, *That they would rather truſt God with their Corn, than truſt the Devil to chuſe their Parliament-men.* For that they

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did now clearly see that all was at stake, and that they had too long pinn'd their faith on other persons sleeves; with a multitude of such other hearty expressions, too tedious here to be related.

But on *Friday* morning, about seven of the Clock, no person almost appearing to Poll against the Collonel, and Proclamation being made three times, that all persons should come in to Poll, or else the Poll would be shut up, about eight of the Clock all being Polled that appeared, the Poll was shut, and the Court adjourned till One that day, till the Books were cast up, which was done by that time, in presence of divers persons appointed by the Sheriff to see the same fairly done; but the Duke, with Sir *Thomas Middleton*, and Sir *Eliab Harvey* withdrawing from the Court after the Poll was shut up, it was thought fit to send to them to be present at the casting up of the same; but Sir *Eliab Harvey* immediately left the Town, and Sir *Thomas Middleton* did not appear himself, but sent a person to inspect the Poll; but no sooner was the Poll closed, but news was brought, there were about 500 came to the Town on purpose to be Polled for Collonel *Mildmay* and *Honeywood*, and many hundreds more that day came in for that purpose? It was given out over night that the Poll would be continued several dates longer, and so divers persons went home and returned as occasion offered; but the Poll being cast up, was found to be one thousand five hundred ninety two for Coll. *Mildmay*, 1517 for Mr *Honeywood*, six hundred sixty nine, for Sir *Eliab Harvey*, 554 for Sir *Thomas Middleton*, among which were some persons that were convicted Papists, and above 100 of the Tribe of *Levi* some of which, to the dishonour of their Profession behaved themselves, to say no worse of them, not like sober men, there being so much good Liquor in the Town, and the generosity of those they took part with, being too much abused by them: But notwithstanding the two Knights men, were nobly kept and entertained, and no manner of Entertainment given by the other side; yet the difference was so great, and would have been as much more, had the Poll continued longer; but the Poll continued for the two Knights to the last man.

But the Sheriff returning to the Court at the time according to custom, proclaimed Collonel *Mildmay*, and Mr *Honeywood* duely Elected, and then Indentures were sealed in Court; after which the Lord *Gray* calling to the Freeholders in a very handsom Speech to this effect delivered himself.

Gentlemen, your zeal you have shown for your Liberties, and the Countries good at this Election, and your gallant Carriage and Behaviour, is never enough sufficiently to be commended; and that which more highly commends you, besides the pains you have taken in attending the hardships that have been put on you, is that you have born your own Charges of this Election your selves, and have not been chargeable to the Gentlemen you have Chosen, but have wisely considered, that such as make it a Trade to bear the Counties Charge, and forst them to be Chosen, do fetch the same out of the Country mens pockets another way, which tends to the ruin of your Estates and Liberties: And I hope this good President will be imitated by our Neighbouring Counties; therefore I shall say no more to you at this time, but wish you still to continue your Zeal and Courage for the maintaining your Liberties, and the Protestant Religion.

At which the Freeholders gave a great shout, crying out, *God bless your Honour, and all good Englishmen that will stand up for the Peoples Liberties*; and then the Knights in two Chairs were carried round the Town, and brought to their Lodgings with an innumerable company of people shouting and crying, *A Maldmay and Honeywood*; which being done, my Lord *Gray* and the Sheriff dined at the Collonel's Chamber, with some other of his friends, and the People attended on Horse-back to wait on my Lord *Gray* and the Collonel, and Mr. *Honeywood* out of Town, which was done about five of the clock, with near five hundred Horse. But I must not forget to relate one Passage which was committed by a person that was against the Collonel, and one that call'd himself a Gentleman, that while my Lord *Gray* and the rest were at Dinner, a little before they were taking Horse to go out of Town, a poor Country-man going along the Streets, by the Door where the Opposites lodged, and crying out, *A Maldmay and Honeywood*, he seeing the Country-man's Zeal, knock'd him down, and broke the Country-man's Legg, and afterwards fled to the Inn for shelter; but the Country-man's friends acquainted the Lord *Gray* and the Collonel with the action, they immediately ordered the person that did the fact to be seized, which was done, and he committed to Goal, and ordered the poor man to be carefully lookt after; which ill Action ought not to be laid to the charge of any but malicious persons; and indeed so much of malice did appear by the words and actions of those that Polled against the Collonel, that a sober man would blush to hear; and among the rest was given out, That no Gentleman, or like a Gentleman, would appear on the Collonel's side, which was so notoriously false, that by the very Book wherein their names were entered, can testifie there were as many Gentlemen of Estates, and men of quality appeared for the Collonel, as they had, and rather more, except Clergy, my Lord *Howard*, my Lord *Gray*, with Sir *Eliab Harvey* himself, and divers other Lords and Gentlemen, making up the numbers of Freeholders on the Collonel's side.

This being the true Account, though not dress up in Terms of Art, or varnished with a florid stile, is hoped will be acceptable to those honest Freeholders; and when other Countries shall see the brave Courage and Wisdom of this County of *Essex*, in the Choice of two such worthy Men, in spight of all Opposition, that they will imitate their Pattern, and no more suffer themselves to be feasted, and drunk out of their reason, which is the reason that Ill men are too often Representatives in Parliament, which never designed by their Entertainments given to the County, but to be doubly and trebly reimburst out of their Electors pockets, which way doth inevitably indanger the Loss and Liberty of the whole Nation in general.

And now good Country-men, do but consider nothing can so soon enslave you and your Posterity, as the Choice of ill Members in Parliament; for to have your Throats cut in the face of Law, is a thousand times worse than the the Force of Arms; and assure your selves, they are worse than the Papists, or at least no better, that would go about to perswade you to submit to any thing short of your just Rights and Liberties.

FINIS